

gamous or dioecious, borne in cluster-like cymules all along the branches, or solitary in the axils, the bracts resembling the leaves but smaller. Calyx campanulate or urcolate, nearly sessile in the bractlets: sepals 5, with very broad wing-margins and a thick mucro, hooded. Stamens 5, included: filaments short-filiform: anthers didymous. Ovary 1-celled, by abortion: styles 2, short, distinct: stigmas minute. Utricle lenticular, included. (Generic name an anagram of *Anychia*, a related genus.)

1. *N. pulvinata* Small. Stem branched at the base, the branches radially spreading and repeatedly dichotomous, 5–20 cm. long, wiry, minutely puberulent or pubescent: leaf-blades ovate to triangular-ovate, 1–5.3 mm. long, strongly revolute, obtuse, rounded or truncate at the base, sessile: stipules torn into capillary segments: bracts and bractlets in pairs: calyx 0.5 mm. long and slightly elongating in anthesis or in fruit, the sepal-hoods blunt-tipped, the winged margins broad, often suborbicular: anthers about 0.3 mm. long or less: utricles oval or ellipsoid, about 0.4 mm. long.—Ancient dunes, southern end of the lake region, Florida.

The southern part of the Florida lake-region is rich in endemic plants. The present genus is one of the less conspicuous plants, except as it forms in green spots on the snow-white sand. It is related to *Anychia*, but differs from it in the distinct styles and included fruits, the fleshy bractlets, and in the habit of growth. It is one of the smaller plants forming the association of the "scrub," but it is conspicuous by its bright green color and cushion-like growth, the plants appearing as mere tufts which often develop into cushions one to two feet in diameter. The type specimens, collected by the writer, in the "scrub" between Avon Park and Sebring, Florida, December 13, 1920, number 9782, are in the herbarium of The New York Botanical Garden.

THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN.

THE ENGLISH SPARROW

I live in a large brick house, one wall of which is covered with Boston ivy and in the shelter of this handsome vine the English sparrows roost by the hundreds, old and young together. Nearby there is a very old English walnut tree in the corner of the vegetable garden, with a rose garden adjoining and a few peach trees scattered about. The sparrows are very tame,

drinking at the bird fountain and helping themselves to anything they wish in the garden or chicken coop. But with all this, I have been much interested in watching them catch insects like good, honest, hard-working native birds. They chase moths, work over a rosebush until every saw-fly is found, and assume the attitude and industry of warblers in their patience and thoroughness.

Black-locust trees shade the front porch of the house and these are badly infested with leaf-miners. I can not be positive, but what are the sparrows hunting when they go quietly from twig to twig through these trees unless it is the miners? And do they break through the epidermis of the leaf to get at them?

The only insects the sparrows seem to avoid are the hard, green "June-bugs" with very scratchy legs, which are so abundant just now that when I approach a peach tree on the fruit of which the beetles are feeding, it seems that I have disturbed a nest of big bumblebees. Robins and redbirds live in the back of the garden, but they also seem to avoid the "June-bugs."

It is only fair that I make this somewhat tardy and forced admission regarding the value of English sparrows in the great battle between insects and man.

I watched a most interesting contest between a female English sparrow and a bird-wing grasshopper,—the one with the pretty yellow and black wings that "dances" in the summer sunshine. For fully five minutes the sparrow chased the insect up and down the street, being foiled at every turn by the quickness of the grasshopper, which rose higher in the air or dropped to a lower level as an aeroplane would do to escape a Zeppelin. I never saw a bird seem so heavy and so helpless as this one in its continued vain efforts to make a captive, and it finally abandoned the chase, allowing the insect to fly away on triumphant wing.

W. A. MURRILL.

LYNCHBURG, VA., Aug. 11, 1924.

BOOK REVIEWS

HOUSE'S LIST OF NEW YORK STATE PLANTS*

No recent systematic paper better illustrates the intolerable conditions existing in nomenclature than this list of New York

* House, H. D. Annotated list of the ferns and flowering plants of New York State. Bull. N. Y. State Mus. 254: 1-757. September, 1924.